

Role of Small and Midsized Enterprises in Promoting Civic Responsibility by Immigrants'.

Panelists included Dr Michael Schneider, director, Maxwell School of International Relations, who is also chairman of AACR's Advisory Committee; Alysia Wilson, Senior Policy Adviser, US Department of Commerce; Tess Scannell, Director, Senior Corps, Corporation for National and Community Services in Washington, DC; Chad Tragakis and Pavlina Majorosova, vice president and account executive respectively of Hill & Knowlton, Washington, DC; Jennifer K Woofert, president, Strategic Sustainability Consulting, Washington, DC; Mahadeva (Matt) Mani, director, Strategic Markets, AT & T, Oakton, Virginia; Joseph Melookaran, member of the President's Advisory Commission on Asian and Pacific Islanders and Dr Piyush C Agrawal, national coordinator, Global Organization of People of Indian Origin.

While acknowledging that there are no rules and regulations or even informal encouragement of civic responsibility in the federal government, Wilson noted that several agencies have taken their own initiatives in this direction.

Wilson said that it is likely the Administration would soon start a program to train 'private and public sector decision-makers in other countries on ethical issues and on how lack of transparency in their own countries impedes growth and progress.'

Agrawal, who kicked off the immigration panel discussion, spoke of the 'socio-political climate' in the United States, 'which for the most part has created an extremely conducive environment for the immigrants to prosper and become whatever they wanted to be,' and argued that in this process the nation has also progressed to be the affluent superpower that it is.

But, he said, 'it must be pointed out that the history of immigration, as well as the assimilation in this country has not been smooth. Every wave of migrants has paid its dues, going through various types of suffering and discrimination, and even the laws enacted in this country of immigrants have not always been fair and equitable despite the claim of liberty and justice for all.'

Agrawal said the oldest immigrant organization, the Association of Indians in America, established in 1967 'when the USA opened its borders for the first time for legal migration from India,' was an exemplar of communities organizing to fight for their rights.

Such organizations, he said, 'usually take their civic responsibility seriously', and by way of example pointed to the activist role played by the community's various bodies following disasters such as 9/11, the tsunami in South Asia, the Gujarat earthquake, and Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

'Besides raising hundreds of thousands of dollars for these causes, we continue to serve the daily needs of the poor, the indigent and the downtrodden here in the US through helping out in homeless shelters, food banks, soup kitchens, medical clinics and other civic activities, including but not limited to, voter registration and 'get the vote out' campaigns,' and 'Be Counted' operation for the US Census.'

Melookaran said that small and medium enterprises' (SME) involvement in corporate civic responsibility (CCR) is a vast untapped potential that could dramatically change the face of our communities.

He said that corporate social responsibility or corporate civic responsibility is often built into the strategic planning of big corporate entities. However, 'If you ask a small business owner about his CCR initiatives, you will draw a blank.'

These, he said, was not because such small businesses did nothing in this area, but because big business did not view the work as corporate initiatives, or dignify such efforts by terming them CCRs.

The flip side, he said, was that many SMEs did nothing in terms of CCR, and said such firms needed encouragement and guidance. He suggested that the MCR should serve as a clearinghouse for activities and training of CCR for such businesses.

A significant majority of employees in the US are SMEs, and therefore a broad-based effort to stimulate CCR initiatives among this group could have a tremendous impact, and be the vehicle for change in communities across the country.

Mani expanded on the theme, from his perspective of a diversity initiative that is an integral part of AT&T in its CCR activities, while Majorosova talked about charity and volunteerism from a Central and East European perspective from the experiences she has had.

She distinguished how volunteerism is abused under repressive regimes and compared it to how it finds a sense of purpose in free and civic-minded societies.

Scannell, who was the featured luncheon speaker, emphasized the importance of the pool of baby-boomers 'who will be ready to share their civic responsibilities if the activities are tailored to their skills and tastes.'

Cherian told India Abroad that his philosophy in founding AACR was to 'educate and encourage all individuals and institutions in the United States to advance the public good of all the people by engaging in civic responsibilities such as volunteerism, social involvement and community service.'

He said the mission statement of AACR, which he authored, holds that this civic responsibility, that 'springs from one's ethical and moral obligations, is more than just a 'social responsibility,' because 'civic responsibility' requires all members of all sectors of life in the United States to give back to the country based on their privilege or living, working, learning, or doing business in the United States.

'The essence of democracy is the participation of the very people and entities that benefit from its fruits,' Cherian said, adding that consequently, 'the active performance of civic responsibility is essential for the continuance of the democratic process in the United States.'

To this end, he said, AACR seeks to foster understanding of the concept of civic responsibility among American citizens, non-citizen US residents, institutions of all kinds.

Admitting that critics see the vision as utopian, Cherian said this was no new thought, but the very philosophy that had guided his founding of the IAFPE more than two decades ago.

He carried that same philosophy over to the Asian American Voters Coalition, which he chaired, and later during his tenure as Commissioner of the EEOC.

'This is something I believe is vital for the future generations of Indian Americans, including my children and grandchildren and everyone else who came here and have made America their home,' he said.

'All of our children and grandchildren will benefit if we give back to society,' he said. 'We have only to see some of the incidents and historical antecedents of immigrants, including Indians in various parts of the world when they isolate themselves and don't integrate and become part of the mainstream.'

Cherian said the conference 'will be a sort of historic conference because it's the first conference ever exclusively focused on immigrants and civic responsibility.'

## TRIBUTE TO STUDENT RECIPIENTS OF COMCAST FOUNDATION'S LEADERS AND ACHIEVERS SCHOLARSHIP FOR 2006

### HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 18, 2006

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to bring to the attention of the House this year's winners from Kansas' Third Congressional District of the Comcast Foundation's Leaders and Achievers Scholarship for 2006.

This scholarship program recognizes students for their community service, leadership skills, positive attitude and academic achievement. These five students, along with fifteen other Kansas City area student scholarship recipients, will be recognized at an event on July 26 at the Harry S Truman Presidential Museum and Library.

In 2006, this program will grant over \$1.7 million, recognizing 1,728 students attending high schools in Comcast-served communities across the United States. Since its inception in 2000, the program has awarded more than \$5.8 million in scholarships.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the following award winners from my congressional district:

Caitlin M. Powell, of Olathe, attending Olathe North High School; Francis N. Pammatmat, of Olathe, attending Olathe Northwest High School; William C. Cromer, of Olathe, attending Olathe South High School; Heidi D. Golubski, of Olathe, attending St. Thomas Aquinas High School; and Jacqueline Behnen, of Overland Park, attending Olathe East High School.

## TRIBUTE TO JOHN DEAN

### HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 18, 2006

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating John Dean as he retires as Police Chief of the Waterford Township Police Department. John will be honored for his lifetime of service at a dinner in Waterford Township Michigan on July 28.

John Dean began his career with the Waterford Township Police Department as a 15-year-old cadet. After serving our country in the Marine Corps Reserve, John joined the Detroit Police Force. In 1975 he joined the Waterford Township Police Department as a Patrol Officer. Over the years he has served as an Undercover Officer, Patrol Sergeant, Detective Sergeant, Youth Liaison Officer, Patrol Lieutenant, and Detective Bureau Commander. He was promoted to Police Chief in 2000.

A graduate of the FBI National Academy, John has received many awards for his consummate police work over the years. They include Officer of the Year, Medal for Bravery, Meritorious Service, Waterford Township Employee of the Year, and the Oakland County NAACP's Presidential Award for implementing the policy to end racial profiling by the police department. His retirement plans are to spend more time with his wife, Andrea, and their three sons.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate John Dean for his exemplary work as a law enforcement officer in Waterford Township. I ask the House of Representatives to join me in applauding his wonderful career and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 18, 2006*

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, July 17, 2006, I could not be present for roll-call votes 375, 376, and 377 due to a previous commitment in my district.

Had I been present, I would have cast the following votes: "yes" on rollcall 375 (H.R. 3085)—To amend the National Trails System Act to update the feasibility and suitability study originally prepared for the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail and provide for the inclusion of new trail segments, land components, and campgrounds associated with that trail; "no" on rollcall 376 (H.R. 3496—National Capital Transportation Amendments Act of 2005); and "yes" on rollcall 377 (H.R. 3729—Federal Judiciary Emergency Tolling Act of 2005).

#### HONORING THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ON RECEIVING THE INNOVATIONS IN AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AWARD FROM THE ASH INSTITUTE

### HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 18, 2006*

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Subcommittee, I would like to congratulate the Department of Veterans Affairs on receiving the prestigious Innovations in American Government Award on Monday, July 10 from the Ash Institute in the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, for their work in developing and implementing the Veterans Health Information Systems and Technology Architecture (VistA). The VA was one of seven winners who were selected from more than 1,000 entries, including 200 forward thinking federal programs, that implemented a creative approach to a significant problem and demonstrated that their solution worked. This \$100,000 award will provide VA the opportunity to share VistA's success story as a role model to other government agencies and the private sector. I am proud of the Department of Veterans Affairs dedication in providing excellence in health care to our Nation's veterans.

The VistA system includes an electronic health record that organizes and presents all relevant patient data to directly support clinical decision-making, and improves safety and efficiency while reducing costs and staff requirements. Patient files are readily available, easily searchable, and proactive in that they alert providers to vital patient information. The records system enables physicians to review a patient's medical history, diagnoses, medica-

tions, charts and X-rays at any of the 1,400 VA sites.

At a time when Americans are wrestling with the high cost and complexity of medical services, VA officials point to VistA as the model for delivering on the key components of health care: accessibility, quality, and cost.

Five years ago, VA won an Innovation Award for creating a health management system that worked to reduce medical mistakes. VistA is a system whereby any authorized caregiver in VA's network has immediate access to every veteran's complete electronic medical record.

According to Dr. Jonathan B. Perlin, VA's Undersecretary for Health, the key to the success of the system was the full support of caregivers from the start. In fact, it was VA physicians who pushed for the system. It was developed in-house so that VA had complete control over the design and implementation.

On the quality-of-care front, the system has reduced outpatient medication errors from the national rate of 5 percent to a fraction of 1 percent. The system also enabled VA to manage vaccinations much more effectively, increasing the vaccination rate for pneumonia from 26 to 92 percent in a decade.

Also important, VistA has helped VA offer enrolled veterans better quality care than a decade ago. Their health status, as defined by patient functioning, has measurably improved. All of this has been provided at the same cost per patient as VA expended 10 years ago, while the rest of the country has seen costs nearly double.

This was a proud day for the VA. Secretary Jim Nicholson said "The VA is now at the forefront of America's health-care industry."

Once again, I would like to congratulate the veteran health providers at the Department of Veterans Affairs on receiving this well deserved award and thank them for their dedication in providing excellence in health care to our Nation's veterans.

#### ADDRESS BY FORMER SENATOR SAM NUNN AT NUCLEAR DANGERS SYMPOSIUM

### HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 18, 2006*

Mr. FALEOMAVEGA. Mr. Speaker, in reference to H. Res. 905, I submit an address by former Senator Sam Nunn, Co-Chairman and CEO of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, presented on December 16, 2003 at a symposium entitled Kazakhstan: Reducing Nuclear Dangers, Increasing Global Security.

#### SYMPOSIUM KEYNOTE ADDRESS

(By Sam Nunn)

I want to thank our guests for joining us today in the United States Senate, where so much deliberation has taken place on how to stop the spread of nuclear weapons, and where the example of Kazakhstan has been welcomed and celebrated as a model of what we must see in the 21st century.

President Nazarbayev is one of the greatest champions of nuclear nonproliferation in the world—not merely by his words, but—most importantly—by his actions and his nation's example.

President Nazarbayev tells a very striking personal story in the prologue of his book

Epicenter of Peace. As a child, he remembered having in his home an army rifle that had been taken by one of his relatives—a Kazakh militiaman—in a rebellion against a regular Russian army unit in 1916. One day his grandmother said that the rifle had brought suffering—that it should be cast out of the house. So President Nazarbayev's father took the rifle to the authorities, but not before removing the bayonet, which the grandmother ordered be made into a sickle. She supplied the handle that she made herself from her old spindle. As a young boy, the President used that sickle to cut hay. This childhood event—dismantling a weapon and building from it a tool of peace and commerce—foreshadowed the work of his adult life. It is the heart of the Biblical passage "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks."

President Nazarbayev dismantled his nation's nuclear weapons and out of that action built a friendship with the United States, an example for the world, and an opportunity for his people to move toward a more promising future. Iran and other nations could learn from Kazakhstan that a nation can grow, modernize, make progress, and gain stature not in spite of renouncing nuclear weapons, but because of it.

Increasing global security also has a critical economic dimension. In making the decision to disarm, President Nazarbayev also chose to use his nation's resources to build an economic base that would benefit all the citizens of Kazakhstan. The world's economy and stability depends on diversifying our energy base—so the Kazakhstan role in energy development is very important. The pressure is appropriately increasing on both governments and industry to embed "transparent" processes and good governance practices into their management systems. The government of Kazakhstan clearly understands this issue, given the heightened attention to increased oil production in the Caspian region. The transparency demonstrated by the government of Kazakhstan recently in announcing at a press conference the royalties received for a recent large petroleum project is a very positive step, and one that should be recognized, showcased, and supported widely. Revenue transparency is an issue on which industry and governments will likely continue to face pressure. I applaud the inclusive and constructive approach that has been taken to date, and I encourage all parties involved to continue the dialogue and working together to advance this important topic. Without economic stability—every step in the security arena becomes more difficult.

Let me acknowledge and thank Minister Vladimir Shkolnik for his role both in Kazakhstan's economic development and in its nuclear disarmament example. President Nazarbayev had the personal vision to renounce nuclear weapons, but he also had something just as important. He had in Minister Shkolnik, a man with the determination and the skill to get it done. The world owes you a great debt, Mr. Minister.

I also want to thank Ambassador Saudabayev, who this past August in Athens, Georgia, so graciously presented to me Kazakhstan's highest award to non-citizens. The Ambassador is a vigorous and talented advocate for Kazakhstan's interests in the United States. He has a keen understanding of where our nations' interests intersect, and how we can advance them together. Kazakhstan is fortunate to have a man of his talent in Washington.

It is fitting that we meet here in the halls of the United States Senate, because it was here that the first legislative debate took place on the question of reducing the nuclear threat in the post-Cold War world.